

"To promote Christian ideals for agriculture and rural life; to interpret the spiritual and religious values which inhere in the processes of agriculture and the relationships of rural life; to magnify and dignify the rural church; to provide a means of fellowship and cooperation among rural agencies: *Toward a Christian Rural Civilization.*"

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The Kingdom of God and Rural Reconstruction

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During the past twenty years there has developed an increasing emphasis in mission policies and programs on what is usually known as rural reconstruction or rural development. This paper is a study of the question as to whether the world mission of the church has any business engaging in such activities, and, if it has, what the place of rural development should be in programs of the church.

In these days in India, activities of rural development are of many varieties, each designed to try to remove a certain recognized cause of injustice, or of poverty, or of exploitation, or of disease, or of inequality, in rural areas.

Rural development is the total of all efforts to improve the physical, social, mental and economic life of rural people. Health, credit arrangements, agricultural methods, productive utilization of time and resources, legislation, literacy, community development, settlement of disputes, recreation, all become part of a rural program.

An important characteristic of rural development is that it is a program—it is a method—but it is not a cause. To see this we have only to look at the several motives, each of which may alone inspire a particular project of rural development. One of these motives is humanistic sympathy. There are many who undertake specific projects of rural development in order to help their fellowmen overcome physical, social, and political handicaps which have crippled or retarded them. Another motive which leads to rural development is nationalism. A vigorous, prosperous, and patriotic countryside is fundamental to a vital Indian nation. A third motive is party politics. One would not suggest that all rural development carried on at the instigation of a political party has this as its motive. That would not be true. But it is unquestionable that in some places, by some persons, rural development activities are carried on in order to secure the support of rural communities for a political party. A fourth motive which results in rural development projects is the desire to gain popularity by supporting the popular movement of the day. It is pleasant, or expedient, to be interested in a popular activity, even though one may have no other interest in it.

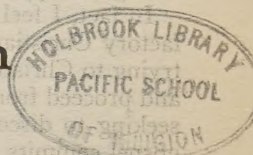
Rural development is also carried on with some motive

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related to religion. One religious motive which inspires such activities is that of acquiring religious merit through charitable activities for less fortunate people. A second motive is that of gaining the goodwill of rural communities through economic and social and medical help, in order that those communities may be more receptive to a religious message, simultaneously or subsequently delivered. There is no one within my acquaintance who is himself actively engaged in rural development activities for whom this is a valid motive, but it is my observation that there are still some missionaries, engaged in other types of work, who justify rural development activities of other missionaries on the basis of this motive. A third religious motive is characteristic of those who believe the Kingdom of God will come through successively, establishing one virtue and one improvement after another in social and economic and political life. To them, rural development activities are the main stream of activity toward the establishment of the Kingdom in rural areas. A fourth religious motive is characteristic of those who believe in the present existence of the Kingdom in the hearts of men, and to whom the second part of the Great Commandment, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," implies a gospel which extends beyond personal actions and attitudes to control all of the impersonal, yet socially and personally significant, relationships and activities of modern life. To this group, also, rural development activities are an integral part of the Gospel of Christ. A fifth religious motive, so I am informed, especially in France and Belgium, grows out of the use of bread in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Only bread raised by an agriculture which is just, and holy, and loving throughout its organization and personnel, is fit for use in the Communion. Therefore, rural development becomes necessary in order to produce such bread.

So when we speak of the Kingdom of God and rural development, we are not setting two causes over against each other; we are discussing the relationship between a cause, a purpose, a motive, on the one hand, and an activity or a program of action, which may be and is carried on in the name of many contradictory motives, on the other hand.

In the foregoing paragraph on the various activities which may be included in rural development, no mention was made of religious or spiritual activities. This omission was intentional. To add a classification labeled "religious activities" would suggest that by adding a department of religion to a secular program of rural development, we



could obtain what might be called a Christian program of rural development. But in the Kingdom of God nothing is secular. Health, economics, politics, recreation, are sacred, in the sense that they are manifestations (or corruptions) of the divine will. The secular solution of social, economic, and political problems is a practice to be challenged and transformed by the good news of the Kingdom. No program of rural development can be made "Christian" by the addition of a department of religion. To accomplish that transition demands revision of the method of presentation of every phase of the rural development program: a revision which would, at every point, replace a secular with a religious approach.

In fact, I feel that we are more likely to come to a satisfactory Christian rural program if we abandon the idea of trying to Christianize a secular rural development program and proceed from the starting point of the Christian gospel, seeking to discover to what activities, in rural areas, that gospel commits us. To do that will force us over into what we tend to segregate as the fields of evangelism and of pastoral responsibility, but it is my conviction that until we have an integration of our presentation of the Kingdom of God which is more organic than a dovetailing together of two or more pre-fabricated programs, we shall fall short of a Christian rural program.

Dangers of Departmentalization

I know of one mission rural development program which was criticized for being too secular. To remedy this an evangelist was added to the staff and turned loose in the same area in which the former secular program, without change or modification, is being carried on. In another area, it was decided that the evangelistic work needed the help of an agriculturist. An agriculturist was turned loose in the area being evangelized, with no thought of modifying the evangelistic program. Such efforts appear to me to resemble taking a plate of tin and a plate of copper, laying them side by side and fusing them together along the adjacent edges, when what is really needed is to throw both into the same heated ladle, until each has given up its properties to a fine bronze alloy. When an evangelist or a pastor protests that he has no time to incorporate into his approach an understanding of the daily toil of his people and of the moral issues inherent in that toil, one can be quite sure that that man is not realistic in his ministry. Similarly, when an agriculturist, an industrial school teacher, or a health worker insists that his professional speciality keeps him busy, and that the moral implications of his field are the province of the evangelist and the pastor, one can be equally sure that that person, whether he realizes it or not, is contributing to that secularization of life which is one of the most dangerous acids eating at the foundations of the religious attitude.

This is one of the difficulties inherent in the application of science to the problems of health, agriculture, and industry: that the more completely we come to understand sequences of events so that we can control them, the more our attention tends to be centered on the sequences themselves, and less and less do we remember the divine power which conceived and started them and which maintains their regularity. The farmer who knows little of scientific agriculture connects the everyday events of life to his religious belief. Spirits cause his misfortunes. A sick animal, a poor crop, a scanty monsoon, is a sign of God's displeasure. Therefore, on a certain night early in July he waves a torch in front of every animal in the village in order to defeat undesirable spirits. For that

reason, he sows seed on a certain day so that the harvest may be good. When one trained in agriculture comes along and shows that animal diseases are due to certain bacteria, when a poor crop is traced to a fungus, when soil temperature, rather than the phase of the moon, governs sowing dates, the farmer's attention is distracted from the place of God in his fortunes to these intermediate events. A similar transformation is likely with the introduction of scientific medicine. Because we push the initiative of God further back from a present illness, we tend to place more and more faith in proteins, vitamins, and quinine, and to think less and less of our dependence on God. Thus our knowledge of science can, if not precisely and fully stated and carefully supplemented, lead us away from, rather than contribute to, our understanding of and allegiance to the Kingdom of God.

When we departmentalize any program so that part of it pursues economic, social, intellectual, and political goals in a secular manner, while another part attempts to supplement this by religious teaching, the result is an inner conflict in the program. A secular approach and a religious attitude are incompatible. Since extending the Kingdom involves the extension of religious attitudes, our program must, throughout, use a religious approach to all problems. So rather than trying to Christianize a secular rural development program, let us see to what Christian rural program the Gospel itself commits us.

The Christian Program in Rural Areas

I suggest that our Christian rural program should include four phases: first, teaching the Gospel records; second, interpreting the Gospel in terms of modern village living; third, developing skill in the use of tools by which Christian stewardship can be accomplished; fourth, establishing personal and group habits which will conserve, enrich, and develop Christian experience.

We would all agree, I believe, that the first step in any Christian program must be the teaching of the Gospel records. It is inconceivable that a Christian community could be established without thorough acquaintance with the Bible. We must know as much as possible about the life and teachings of Jesus: what he said, what he did, who he was. To understand these we must know something of Jewish history, of the development of the law of Moses, of the messianic hope, of the rise and message of the prophets, of the contemporary evils against which the prophets fought, of the political Palestine in which Jesus lived, of the experience of the apostles after Jesus' death and resurrection. These are indispensable to us and they are to anyone else seeking to enter into the Kingdom.

The second phase of our presentation must be an interpretation of the Gospel in terms of modern village living. This must include a statement of the meaning of the Gospel in terms of personal morality, an emphasis on stewardship which includes health, time, productive resources and personal ability, as well as cash in hand, and an explanation of some of the moral issues involved in many of the impersonal relationships of modern economic and political life. If there is any value in shared human experience and in the cumulative Christian experience of the centuries, surely the benefit of that should be included in our presentation of the Good News. The fundamental statement is to be found in the Bible records, but the implications of that Gospel for us have been coming to light one by one from the days of the insight of Peter and of Paul until the present day.

is not enough. Religious experience lives by prayer, by worship, by participation, by expression. That is the understanding back of programs to encourage private Bible study and prayer, family devotions, congregational worship, community expression. Probably every pastor and evangelistic missionary has his program for trying to develop these continuing habits. They are indispensable.

I want to suggest, however, that when we enlarge and enrich our teaching of stewardship in the Christian program, and when we incorporate into our interpretation of the Gospel and the moral implications of the impersonal relationships of our social, economic and political life, we are very likely to find that our enriched program of teaching is no longer reflected by the practices which we have developed for nourishing personal religious life and for developing congregational worship and expression.

In his Rauschenbusch lectures of 1932 on *The Social Gospel and the Christian Cultus*,* Dr. C. C. Morrison drew attention to this problem. To grasp the relevance of his argument, we should remember that when he uses the terms "social gospel" and "prophetic preaching" he is referring to those identical elements of an enlarged concept of stewardship and of a new emphasis on the morality of impersonal relationships which we are discussing here.

"When the prophet, standing in his pulpit, proclaims the new social imperative, the worshipers are startled and shocked at his intrusion. He is preaching politics, they say, or science, or economics, or internationalism; we want our preacher to talk about religion! . . . The subject matter of our social idealism is not religious. It is secular. But it must be made religious. And to make it religious it must be given an organic place in the liturgy of communal worship, so that it shall not be merely the individual utterance of a preacher but the confessional utterance of the worshipping congregation itself. . . .

" . . . The continued existence of public religion as an effective force in our civilization now depends upon the emergence of a priesthood competent to take the dreams and ideals of the prophet and weave them into the fabric of collective ritual and churchly institution. . . .

"The weakness of churchly religion today derives chiefly from the fact that its modes of worship were fashioned under the influence of a world view which no longer possesses reality. The things we do in church, the things we say and sing, the imagery with which our prayers and worship are bodied forth, belong to a world outlook which the present generation has, everywhere outside the church, abandoned. . . .

"The social gospel will continue to be only an irritating gospel, regarded by the laity as a handful of sand thrown into the delicate machinery of devotion, until a new mechanism is set up which is geared in with the social task which our prophets have set before the modern church. In a word, the social gospel can never be a gospel at all, until the trained leaders of organized religion employ themselves in the holy business of recreating the liturgies of religion so that the laity may feel the social imperative as explicitly related to the will of God. . . .

" . . . The time has come to make the social imperatives at home in the church, to adorn them with the symbolic robes of worship, to give them wording in the forms of prayers, to interpret baptism and communion in the light

of them, and to invest the very altar itself with the presence of a God whose gracious will applies not only to the inner life of those who worship, but to the commercial, political, industrial, international order of the world from whose teeming and complex life the worshiper has momentarily withdrawn only to plunge into it again when he rises from his knees."

In this discussion, obviously, Dr. Morrison was dealing with the ritual of the church service. The same argument holds, however, in all of personal and group religious life. Our hymns, our imagery in prayer and sermon, our liturgies, our devotional programs must mirror accurately and completely the broad outline of our Christian program. This applies to our rural program. We cannot sustain and develop a Christian consciousness on the broad implications of stewardship and social morality by means of prayer and worship habits based largely on individual piety. The routine, the ritual, the imagery of our Christian rural program must express in all of its manifestations the implications of the Gospel for modern village living.

Our program must provide for establishing personal and group habits of prayer, worship, and group expression which explicitly state that the production of shoes, of food, of baskets, of cloth, of pottery, of ploughs is a service rendered to God through ministering to one's neighbor. We have had this explicitness in our rituals in regard to personal piety; we need more of it expressing stewardship and social morality. Each Christian must be made to see, through its place in public worship, that the dedication of one's fields to the service of Christ is an integral part of acceptance of the Christian faith. Our responsive readings, our prayers, our hymns must reflect the imperative of stewardship of health, of utilization of time, of conservation and dedication of productive resources, of the development of personal abilities. We cannot build our ceremonies around a single phase of the Gospel, yet expect our presentation to result in an honest discipleship. If we want our program to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we must recast our ceremonies, our vocabulary, our hymns, our devotional practices, our orders of worship, until every implication of the full Gospel of Christ blossoms truly and logically out of the very devotional habits and worship literature of the people.

Conclusion

Now let me review, in a somewhat different form, yet in the light of the foregoing discussion, the thesis with which I began. During the past generation or two the conscience of Christian leaders has been awakened to the implications of the Gospel demanding stewardship in fields where it had not been generally stressed, and demanding criteria of morality in the vast field of impersonal relationships in our modern, economic, social, and political life. Leaders began to realize the effect of economic systems on personality. They began to see the social waste involved in personal inefficiency. They came to feel that in a world where vast human needs are still unsatisfied, the Christian spirit must react to these conditions by challenging social as well as personal sin, by making economic systems subservient to the development of personality, by ending industrial inefficiency. How much of this new zeal was inspired by an enlarged vision of Christian stewardship and morality, how much grew out of the development of liberal philosophy, and how much was due to slogans of an emerging industrial civilization, it is difficult to say. The last two were probably as often the primary agents as was the first.

* *The Social Gospel and the Christian Cultus*, by Charles Clayton Morrison, Harper and Brothers, New York, \$2.00. Quotations used with the kind permission of publisher and author.

knowledge of the rules of hygiene and sanitation, and by the practice of scientific medicine. It will bear the fruit of efficient production of material goods for the use of God's children, nurtured by technical skill and the desire to use most fully our talents of time and of productive resources. It will bear the fruit of highly trained and consecrated workers in many fields, motivated by their desire to be good stewards of their personal abilities. Unless or until that branch develops as it should, the tree of the Christian program does not truly represent the Christian Gospel. Our Christian program in rural areas must include, in its interpretation of the Gospel in terms of village living, an increased, enlarged, and realistic emphasis on stewardship of personal abilities, of time, of productive resources.

C. *The Morality of Impersonal Contacts*

Finally our interpretation of the Gospel in terms of modern village living must include an explanation of some of the moral issues involved in many of the impersonal relationships of modern economic and political life. The Christian conscience has awakened, chiefly during the past generation, to a realization that many impersonal relationships are as fruitful avenues of discipleship or of sin as are personal contacts. We have become conscious that we may commit murder quite as truly by the way we spend our money for food and clothing as by the use of a gun or a knife. We are learning that a personality can be as effectively outraged by conditions of employment as by rape. We have come to know that living behind discriminatory tariff walls is a moral equivalent of gathering together an abundance of the material goods of life and retiring within a well-guarded home, while one's brothers are undernourished and insufficiently clad in the streets outside. This new awareness does not mean that the Gospel has changed. It is the same Gospel. But we have come to see that in the complex life of the world today, new expressions, new tools, new avenues of Christian love are essential.

These problems of impersonal relationships extend everywhere in the world into rural areas. Today the right of a farmer to raise a crop, behind tariff protection, which could be better raised by another farmer somewhere else is a moral issue. It, again, is a matter of stewardship: that every man shall do his part in conserving and in utilizing divinely-given resources. To greatly oversimplify the issue for purposes of illustration, if I farm one field which is capable of growing either cotton, or maize and potatoes, and my neighbor's field will grow only cotton, and there are no other sources of those products for our village, then stewardship demands that I stick to maize and potatoes and let my friend raise cotton. Many people question seriously the quality of stewardship involved in devoting soil in the control of Christians to the cultivation of tobacco, just as most of us would feel that there are more important uses of land, in a generation fed on insufficient milk, fruits, and vegetables, than the cultivation of the opium-poppy or of the marijuana hemp. Indian agriculture is today full of such moral issues. One solution of them is in accord with the spirit of the Gospel; the other is not.

Christians borrow and lend money. Does our Christian program include a clear explanation of the moral issues involved, of the effects which lent money can have in enriching or in exploiting personality? Christians buy and sell in the market-place. Do they realize the moral consequences of the support they give producing countries when they buy that country's product? Does our Christian program adequately explain this effect?

The day is gone when any Christian program could, with loyalty to its Master, ignore these issues. Today, either we study the moral implications of the vast impersonal relationships in social, economic, and political life and include emphatic consideration of them in our Christian program, or we deny Christ. Limited liability stock companies, the practice of lending and borrowing money at a fixed rate of interest, the establishing of protective tariffs, have all put into the hands of most Christians practices which can be as instrumental of personal sin as greed, anger, and indifference. If our Christian program is to present realistically the Christian Gospel, it must adequately bring these implications into its teaching. And let no one think that the life of any man or woman in any Indian village is so far removed from these issues that consideration of these problems is irrelevant in our rural problem. To claim that is to confess our own lack of biblical realism or of moral honesty.

I should say that a third phase of our program must be the provision of aid in developing the tools by which Christian stewardship can be accomplished: literacy, manual dexterity, spiritual sensitivity, scientific and social training. I remember being much impressed during university days by the statement of a prominent professor that the test of morality is no longer purity of heart but the intelligent skill of accomplishment. It made a great impression on me, perhaps greater than the idea deserved—"The test of morality is no longer purity of heart but the intelligent skill of accomplishment." While we would protest that purity of heart is not an outgrown virtue, we are forced by a realistic understanding of the Gospel and of our world to realize that intelligent skill of accomplishment is essential to Christian stewardship and to personal morality in a society involving impersonal relationships. Until we learn to read, until we train our bodies to operate with agility, strength, and precision, until we learn all we can of the world about us, we shall be neglecting talents which may be in us and thereby shall be falling short of the mark of devoted stewardship. The Christian program, having impressed upon us the organic place which stewardship holds in the Gospel, must go on to insure that the tools necessary for the development of such stewardship are at hand.

We should canvass the opportunities for literary and technical and manual education offered by the state, to make sure that we do not duplicate these in such a way as to throw an unnecessary burden on the program of the church. But, to the extent that we make use of secular education for developing the tools of stewardship, we must reinforce our Christian program so that it keeps alive in us the spirit of stewardship, and the Christian stand on the moral issues which the new training raises. Where government agencies do not exist for giving the training of hand and mind without which Christian stewardship cannot be accomplished, we must find place for that training in our Christian program.

Expressing the Program in Forms of Worship

Finally, our Christian program must provide for establishing personal and group habits of prayer, study, discussion and expression which will conserve the teachings given, support a sustained discipleship, and inspire the discovery of new implications of the Gospel. We go back again to a phase of the Christian program for which pastors and missionaries have long recognized the need. Christian leaders have long realized that *listening*—to sermons, to expositions of the Gospel, to periodic prayer

14. *The Morality of Personal Contacts*

In the first place, of course, we must be very sure that our program is so arranged that it makes clear the implications of the Gospel as to personal morality. From what I have seen of mission programs, it is in this that they have been most nearly adequate. We must be certain that everyone who hears the Gospel knows that there can be no possibility of Christian experience without honesty. Unquestionably, the historic statement of the Golden Rule will have a favored spot in our program. In connection with the historic statement, however, we must make clear the applications of it to everyday life: how this attitude rules out envy of position, ability, or possessions; how it makes adultery impossible; how it prohibits thievery; how it demands respect for and appreciative care of parents. The Sermon on the Mount will be prominent in our teaching, and along with it will be the interpretation of the centuries as to what, in modern village living, are the applications of turning the other cheek, of returning good for evil, of trying to behave like the salt of the earth. We will explain and illustrate the corporate Christian conviction as to the manifestations of humility, of peace-making, of the pure in heart, of self-forgetfulness in service. All of these and more will we pour into our program because they translate the divine will into the behavior vernacular of our day, they give the principles and the attitudes of the Gospel concrete reality, they bring to each new person the accumulated experience and discernment of the Christian Church as to the implications of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in terms of personal morality.

B. *Stewardship*

Next, our interpretation of the Gospel records must include an emphasis on stewardship including health, time, productive resources, and personal ability, as well as cash in hand. I doubt if this has been given anything like as thorough interpretation as have implications of personal morality. One gets the impression that most references to stewardship precede or accompany opportunities for contributing money to various causes. Important as these are, they by no means end the implications of the attitude of stewardship, as we would all agree. I feel this weak spot in our program very keenly. It seems to me that this is the foundation in the Christian Gospel for many activities into which allegiance to Jesus Christ has forced us, yet which, because of the lack of a fuller explanation of stewardship in our presentation of the Gospel, have been forced into a secular position.

Take, for instance, the matter of stewardship of personal abilities. We say that a man has ability as a tennis player when he can place his serve unerringly in the court, when he can make hard and accurate volleys, when he can vary his play with deceptive cuts and by swift returns to the very edges of the court. That is active ability. But while that man is playing, there may be another standing beside the court, watching, who has never had a racket in his hand, and yet whose tennis ability, potentially, is equal to that of him who is playing. Perhaps he has never known there is such a game. Perhaps he has been busy at other activities and has never had time to practice. So the strength of wrist, the coordination of eye and muscle, the swing of the shoulder, the agility of the feet are going to waste so far as tennis playing is concerned. Now imagine for a moment that the ability to play tennis well is of value to the Kingdom of God. Remembering the parable of the talents, we would certainly say that the first man is the steward of a very great gift; he has a sacred duty to perform. The

second man, also, has the duty of making his latent ability active, of developing his potential skill into working condition, so that he, too, may be able to make his contribution to the Kingdom.

Do you see to what this leads us? It means that every man and every woman who wishes to enter the Kingdom, must take upon himself the responsibility of developing his latent abilities, of training his fingers to agility, of sharpening his mind for incisive thinking and of equipping it with the tools of knowledge, of sensitizing his understanding to the ills, and needs, and possibilities of his fellow-men. It means that every sincere citizen of the Kingdom is compelled by the demands of stewardship, to search his own body and mind for potential abilities to heal the sick of body or the sick of spirit, to blot out the possibility of hungry mouths, to ease the burden of economic inequality on the weary and the worn, to cleanse political institutions. In the spirit of good stewardship we are committed to physical agility, to manual dexterity, to mental competence, and our Christian program is inevitably committed, first, to making this implication of stewardship clear to every man to whom it introduces Jesus Christ, and, second, to making it possible for men to practise that stewardship.

These duties our Christian program performs very incompletely. We have recognized the need for developing physical and mental abilities, but we have not sufficiently woven the Christian ideal of stewardship into our Christian program. As long as this weakness exists, there will remain the tendency for training to become secular, and for students to forget their faith in their absorption in new knowledge, because the purpose of providing education, the purpose of becoming educated, was never made sufficiently clear to them by an adequate attention to Christian stewardship of abilities in the Christian program by which they were nurtured.

Think for a moment of the stewardship of time and of productive resources. Whatever the prevailing economic system or habit of the world may be, the Christian will produce primarily to meet a need of people. The Christian farmer farms to produce food, to feed people. The Christian shoemaker makes shoes that people may be shod. The Christian doctor practises medicine that people may have health. If a farmer, having been given by God 365 days in each year, or 313 days excluding Sundays, in which to produce food, and if the farmer then proceeds to work at his job only 150 days, he is an unprofitable servant; he is a poor steward.

Agricultural improvement for that man is not a matter of building a sounder economic base for nationalism, nor of accepting a favor from a charitable neighbor, nor of being bribed into supporting a political party; it is a matter of Christian stewardship. He has abilities which he is not using.

That is why I say that the basis of Christian activities resembling secular rural development programs is in Christian stewardship. We can no more develop an integrated Christian program by separating agricultural improvement from the preaching and teaching of the Gospel, than you could develop an integrated tree by cutting a bud from the stem of a seedling and planting it a short distance away to take root for itself. That bud was meant to stay on the stem, developing into a large branch, remaining an organic part and fulfilling a necessary function in the life of the tree. There is a neglected bud on the tree of the Christian program, out of which it was intended that there should grow the branch of Christian stewardship. The branch of stewardship will bear the fruit of health, nurtured by a

At least, in the great majority of cases, where a deeper understanding of Christian stewardship was the cause, the procedure followed was not to modify the presentation of the Gospel so as to make the integral nature of the new stewardship apparent, but to jump to a championship of the social changes in which that comprehensive stewardship, rightly understood, must result. The outcome—the possibility of such a subject as we discuss here—The Kingdom of God and Rural Development. It is a timely subject, because it reflects so accurately the dilemma of much of our thinking. We are confronted with movements for social improvement which we instinctively know must be a part of our Christian program, yet most of us are not quite sure why they should be included, and many who produce reasons draw them out of some principles of liberal philosophy or of industrial civilization, rather than out of the Gospel. We have become convinced that the Kingdom of God must concern itself with worldly problems of economics, industry, and politics, but rather than find and express adequately in our common faith the bases in the Gospel for these worldly concerns, we often justify our new responsibilities by secular considerations.

My thesis is, first, that the very nature of the Christian Gospel, through its ideal of stewardship and through its necessity for social as well as personal morality, necessitates the inclusion in any rural program which pretends realistically to present the Christian Gospel of many "rural development" activities; second, that, as outgrowths of the Gospel ideals of stewardship and social morality, these activities must be conducted as religious activities, so that the root in the Christian Gospel from which they spring is clearly apparent; third, that our forms of worship, our habits of devotion, our expressions of corporate faith must be so worded that the implications of the whole Christian Gospel "shall be the confessional utterance of the worshipping congregation."

It is my conviction that until we give effect to these necessities our program consisting of a religious presentation of personal piety and a secular presentation of other parts of the program such as rural development, loosely dovetailed together, is like a house divided against itself, one part fighting against the other. The secular presentation of one part of the program tends to destroy the religious attitude which the other phase of the program is trying to build up. Christian rural development has technical problems, yes. It has administrative problems, yes. But its greatest need today is for expression in the program of the Gospel from which it came, so that its religious character and its place in the Christian Gospel are clearly evident.

Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletins are sent regularly, ten times a year, to all members. The Christian Rural Fellowship is a membership organization open to all who are interested in its purposes: To promote Christian ideals for agriculture and rural life; to interpret the spiritual and religious values which inhere in the processes of agriculture and the relationships of rural life; to magnify and dignify the rural church; to provide a means of fellowship and cooperation among rural agencies; Toward a Christian Rural Civilization.

There are four types of membership: Subscribing \$1.00; Contributing \$5.00; Sustaining \$10; Patron \$25. All members also receive Agricultural Missions Notes published quarterly by the Agricultural Missions Foundation and the regular Fellowship news-letter in addition to the Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletins.

A complete list of Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletins will be sent on request.

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That is why I say that the basis of Christian activities resembling secular rural development programs is in Christian stewardship. We can no more develop an integrated Christian program by separating agricultural improvement from the preaching and teaching of the Gospel, than you could develop an integrated tree by cutting a bud from the stem of a seedling and planting it a short distance away to take root for itself. That bud was meant to stay on the stem, developing into a large branch, remaining an organic part and fulfilling a necessary function in the life of the tree. There is a neglected bud on the tree of the Christian program, out of which it was intended that there should grow the branch of Christian stewardship. The branch of stewardship will bear the fruit of health, nurtured by a

tates the inclusion in any rural program which pretends realistically to present the Christian Gospel of many "rural development" activities; second, that, as outgrowths of the Gospel ideals of stewardship and social morality, these activities must be conducted as religious activities, so that the root in the Christian Gospel from which they spring is clearly apparent; third, that our forms of worship, our habits of devotion, our expressions of corporate faith must be so worded that the implications of the whole Christian Gospel "shall be the confessional utterance of the worshipping congregation."

It is my conviction that until we give effect to these necessities our program consisting of a religious presentation of personal piety and a secular presentation of other parts of the program such as rural development, loosely dovetailed together, is like a house divided against itself, one part fighting against the other. The secular presentation of one part of the program tends to destroy the religious attitude which the other phase of the program is trying to build up. Christian rural development has technical problems, yes. It has administrative problems, yes. But its greatest need today is for expression in the program of the Gospel from which it came, so that its religious character and its place in the Christian Gospel are clearly evident.

Translate the divine will into the behavior of the day, they give the principles and the attitudes of the Gospel concrete reality, they bring to each new person the accumulated experience and discernment of the Christian Church as to the implications of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in terms of personal morality.

Next on the list of the Christian Rural Fellowship is the Agricultural Missions Foundation, which is an organization for the purpose of promoting Christian ideals for agriculture and rural life; to interpret the spiritual and religious values which inhere in the processes of agriculture and the relationships of rural life; to magnify and dignify the rural church; to provide a means of fellowship and cooperation among rural agencies; Toward a Christian Rural Civilization.

There are four types of membership: Subscribing \$1.00; Contributing \$5.00; Sustaining \$10; Patron \$25. All members also receive Agricultural Missions Notes published quarterly by the Agricultural Missions Foundation and the regular Fellowship news-letter in addition to the Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletins.

A complete list of Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletins will be sent on request.

Christian doctor practices medicine that people may have health. If a farmer, having been given by God 365 days in each year, or 31 1/2 days excluding Sundays, in which to produce food, and if the farmer then proceeds to work at his job only 150 days, he is an unprofitable servant; he is a poor steward.

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